

Dr. Currey's Dispatch

DAILY—WEEKLY—SUNDAY

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SATURDAY, JUNE 8, 1907.

It is not work that kills men; it is worry. Work is healthy; you can hardly put more upon a man than he can bear.—H. W. Beecher.

THE HOUSTON PLAN.

Can business methods be applied to city government by officers selected under the usual system of ward politics?

Can business methods be applied under the commission plan of municipal government? The first question answers itself. The second question is answered affirmatively and with emphasis in an official statement from the city of Houston, Texas, with a copy of which we have been favored. Houston has given the experiment a fair trial, and any proposal to return to the old system would be laughed to scorn.

The new charter passed the Legislature in 1905. It confers the usual powers upon the municipal corporation, and, so far as we have examined it, does not differ in its general provisions from the charter of Richmond. The essential and radical difference is in the legislative body. Instead of having a Council and Board of Aldermen consisting of several members from each ward, the administration of the business affairs of the city is committed to a Mayor and four aldermen, who, together, are known and designated as the City Council. These are elected by vote of the people from the city at large and hold office for two years. The Mayor receives a salary of \$4,000 a year and each of the commissioners a salary of \$2,400. This "Council" is continuously in session from day to day, each giving his entire time to the city's business, and welfare. Public sessions are held every Monday. "Each commissioner," says the official statement, "represents the whole city. Instead of a particular ward; hence his task is the development of the city as a whole, and not one section at the expense of another. Ward lines have been abolished in Houston and the ward idea placed among the relics of things that were." In short, the business affairs of the whole city of Houston are managed by a president and board of directors, like other business corporations are managed.

What is the result? In less than one year this form of government enabled the city to wipe out a floating indebtedness of approximately \$400,000, while current expenses were promptly met month by month.

It enabled the present administration, without bond issue, to erect three excellent modern brick school buildings at a cost of \$125,000, to pave six miles of streets; to expend \$60,000 for public parks, and to appropriate \$50,000 for harbor improvement. It has created business confidence in the city government and strengthened its credit. The tax levy has been reduced from \$2 to \$1.50 on the \$100, it being the policy of the Council to continue the reduction 10 per cent. a year, until a rate of 1 per cent. is reached.

It has cleaned out the gambling houses and poolrooms and closed the saloons at 1 o'clock.

During the twenty-two months of its existence, there has not been a speech on the floor of the chamber, nor a veto by the Mayor. The average length of the public sessions of the Council is ten minutes.

"Our experience," says the official statement, "demonstrates to the world that the commission form of city government is decidedly a success."

Again we ask: As this plan has proven to be so successful in Houston and Galveston, why would it not be equally successful in Richmond? Surely, it is worth investigating. The plan has not only helped Houston in the ways above indicated, but it is a splendid advertisement for the city. The statement which Houston is circulating—that her government is ideal; that city revenues are expended to the best advantage; that improvements are being made, while the tax rate is being lowered—is a tempting inducement to investors and to settlers. Such a statement would be equally as strong a drawing card for Richmond.

"EXCLUSIVE" NEWS TWO MONTHS OLD.

The News Leader of yesterday afternoon contains an interesting and inspiring front-page item, warmly congratulating itself on having printed, the day before, certain information regarding the plans of Mr. J. Pierpont Morgan. "Morgan Stays Episcopal," says its headline, modestly continuing: "News Leader Informs World of His Coming to Convention." The story begins:

"J. Pierpont Morgan's having rented the Rutherford mansion, at Second and Grace Streets, for the purpose of attending the general Episcopal convention, which was announced exclusively in yesterday's News Leader, has excited the greatest interest all over the world."

The fact that Mr. Morgan has rented the Rutherford house for the Episcopal convention is not, as we view the matter, of world-wide importance. That, however, is of no especial moment. The news that he had done so was not "announced exclusively" in the News Leader of Thursday. It was announced exclusively in The Times-Dispatch of two months ago. We dislike to throw cold water upon exuberant enthusiasm, but if the News Leader will turn to our issue of April 8th, it will find there, on page 3, full details of the transaction which it so cordially congratulates itself at discovering on June 6th.

In asserting that its "exclusive" announcement had excited great interest "all over the world," our neighbor is laboring under several misapprehensions. In the first place, as already indicated, its announcement was not exclusive, as that word is ordinarily employed by nice and accurate users of language. In the second place, it did not excite interest all over the world. Undoubtedly there are remote portions of the habitable globe beyond the purview of Barton Heights and Manchester, where the News Leader's news stories, especially its two-months-old stories, do not instantaneously reach, percolate and circulate. Besides, interest in Mr. Morgan's Richmond arrangements, wherever any such interest was natural, had already been excited long, long ago, when the News Leader was not noticing. The Times-Dispatch attended to that at the proper time. News can travel great distances even in a day, notwithstanding that it occasionally takes some months to get around to the News Leader office. This exclusive bit has been traveling for a long time now, and even the benighted places decline to get excited about it any more.

JOE WHEELER'S LOYALTY IMPEACHED.

Did General Joe Wheeler ever confess to President McKinley that he fought in the Confederate army "under a mistake?"

According to an Associated Press dispatch, such a statement was made recently in Chattanooga by Vice-President Fairbanks. The occasion was a lunch given by the Society of Chattanoogans to the Vice-President. He was introduced by Senator J. B. Frazier, and in the course of his remarks said that he was receiving his first knowledge of Chattanooga.

He found its people in line, in the forefront, in fact, in sentiments of patriotism, of progress and of devotion to a common country and a common flag. As illustrating the present sentiments of the section, Mr. Fairbanks told of his presence with President McKinley when General "Joe" Wheeler applied for assignment to duty in the war against Spain.

"You wish, General," the President said, "to take up service in active warfare?"

"And the little man with gray hair and beard replied: 'Yes, Mr. President; once under a mistake I fought against the flag. Now, please God, before I die, I wish to fight in that flag's defense.'"

The report in the Chattanooga Times contains the name of "General Joe Hooker," instead of "General Joe Wheeler," as the Associated Press has it. But that is clearly an error, as General Hooker was a Federal officer and died in 1879. The Vice-President's remark, if made at all, was made of General Wheeler, and we are amazed that no question was raised by any of the Southerners present.

The Times-Dispatch is unwilling to allow such a charge against an honored Confederate general to pass unchallenged. Of course, we shall not question the veracity of Mr. Fairbanks, but we do not believe that General Wheeler ever felt or expressed such a disloyal sentiment as that attributed to him by the Vice-President. There is a mistake somewhere. What say the Confederates?

MR. BRYAN AND THE ISSUES.

According to Mr. Bryan's way of thinking, both the trusts and railroads are more important political issues than the tariff. Talking to the reporters yesterday, he said: "I believe the Democratic party, in its national platform, will take cognizance of all three issues, but in my opinion the tariff will not be the paramount issue."

Federal regulation of railroads cannot be taken from the Republicans while Mr. Roosevelt leads the party. Southern Democrats will never consent to the endorsement of Mr. Bryan's socialistic government-ownership policy. There can be no effective regulation of the trusts without a revision of the Dingley schedules. In Democratic circles the initiative and referendum in locked upon as a popular joke, and rather a bad joke at that. If the tariff is to be tossed aside, where does Mr. Bryan purpose to find a "paramount" issue that voters will vote for?—New York World.

The people make the paramount issue, and we believe that they will force the tariff to the front in the next campaign. Neither Mr. Bryan nor Mr. Roosevelt will be able to prevent it.

If the confession which Harry Orchard has made is true, he is utterly unreliable and not to be believed on oath. This may be an "Irish lull," but it is comprehensible. No jury will convict Haywood on the unsupported testimony of such a flend as Orchard has represented himself to be.

Professor Sturt, of Chicago, asserts that Methuselah did not live to be 900 years old, but does not seem very sure what age he did attain. If the professor will take the date of the gentleman's death, B. C., and subtract it from

the date of his birth, he will ascertain the exact figure.

The United States sailor who was excluded from a Newport dance hall because of his uniform has received a verdict for 25 cents. Doubtless he should think himself lucky to have escaped without a fine.

"The practice of kissing babies is a pernicious one," says a doctor. Moreover, it is a puzzle to one, conventionally speaking, owing to the difficulty of identifying a him from a her.

It is coming to be understood that Count Okuma's jingo hostility to the United States is merely a little privately manufactured ruse, and not designed for general export.

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Still, Mr. Fairbanks is doubtless Indiana's most distinguished statesman, apart from her novelists.

Of course Pennsylvania's favorite son will come in for some pillorying and some Knox.

Accounts of Mayor Schmitt's little difficulties are swamped at Boise on their way East.

"The Finnish diet" reminds us somewhat of Packingtown before the investigation.

What summer most needs is doubtless a rigid home rule bill.

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PERSONAL AND GENERAL.

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The census can fear for forty days and the eagle twenty-eight days.

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Speaking at Cardiff, Wales, recently, Miss Galloway, a suffragette, stated that a bride's blushes are caused by the knowledge of the kind of man she is going to marry.

Furrier pills are the latest sanitary device for the delivery of pure milk in London and other large English towns. They are used only once. They are made of pulp and are sterilized by a heat of 500 degrees Fahrenheit.

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Rebuked by an English Sunday-school teacher for bringing her little four-year-old brother to class with her, the sister replied: "If you please, teacher, I want to bring him next Sunday, too, as mother wishes him to have all the pleasure he can before he has a tooth pulled on Wednesday next."

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